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more justly, if he sets it down to the interest we take in him from his book, and from reflecting that he is a stranger in a foreign land. We think, too, that the alterations must have been made by some friend of, perhaps, very good intentions, but poor judgment.

Our author's language is all good, but is not strictly the poetick language; and we should think that he had not been a wide and constant reader, of the old English poets.

Now that we have gone through with our notice of the few trifling faults of this volume, we would advise our readers to make themselves acquainted with it. They certainly will find it worthy their pride, in the general poverty of literature in our country. It remains for us to thank our author for what he has done for our good name, and to hope from him still more. May he find the strangers, by whom he is surrounded, as fair, and void of prejudices, as is his own mind, and may his solitary labours be cheered by that fame which he so well deserves.



ART. XVII. *An authentic Narrative of the loss of the American brig Commerce, wrecked on the western coast of Africa, in the month of August, 1815; with an account of the sufferings of her surviving officers and crew, who were enslaved by the wandering Arabs on the great African Desert, or Zahahrah;—and observations historical, geographical, &c. made during the travels of the author, while a slave to the Arabs, and in the empire of Morocco. By James Riley, late master and supercargo. Preceded by a brief sketch of the author's life; and concluded by a description of the famous city of Tombuctoo, on the river Niger, and of another large city, far south of it, on the same river, called Wassanah; narrated to the author at Mogadore, by Sidi Hamet, an Arabian merchant;—with an Arabic and English Vocabulary. T. & W. Mercein, New York, 1817. pp. 570.*

THIS portentous title page is not the only external recommendation of the volume before us. It is ornamented with a portrait of the author, furnished with rare plates, illustrative of divers scenes, descriptions, and adventures, and sup-

plied with an *original* map of the countries into which he was led by the stars of ill omen, that presided over his destiny. Attracted by these claims on our notice, as well as the novelty of the subject, we took up the book with eagerness, and read it through, we are willing to acknowledge, with a good deal of interest.

Among the numerous classes of books, which are daily turned out upon the community, no one probably is so variable in its merits, as that comprizing books of travels. Almost every man, of every different calling in life, and every walk in society, if by accident or necessity he happens once in his life to wander from the precincts of his own native village, thinks it his duty to enlighten the publick with a narrative of his adventures—the results of his observations on the habits and character of the strange men whom he visits—deep speculations on the peculiarities of their governments, or sagacious remarks on their political interests, civil institutions, and military establishments. These, to be sure, are momentous topicks, and we would not deny travellers the privilege of discussing them in their own way ;—much less would we question their right of introducing us to such scenes of bravery and adventure, hazard and peril, as it has been their fortune to encounter. If a man has had the courage to clamber to the summit of a mountain, whose top is hid in the clouds, and peep into the burning crater of a volcano, or has descended into the bowels of the earth through the intricate windings of a yawning cavern, it is highly important that the world should know it. All we desire of him is, that he will take due care to inform us how he gets safely back from such dangerous excursions. We have scarcely yet recovered from the distressing uncertainty in which we were left by Dr. Clarke, when, after having placed himself on the icy pinnacle of Mount Gargarus, he assured us that if he took another step he should be inevitably dashed in pieces in the tremendous abyss below.

We think, indeed, that none of the book making fraternity have so strong claims on our indulgence as travellers. They are usually obliged to write in haste and under many disadvantages. They are not often men whose habits of life have led them to the arduous exercise of thinking deeply, observing with accuracy, or judging with discrimination. In a word, they are not always scholars, and we should not

require them to write or think as scholars. For this reason, we should generally feel quite as thankful to them, if they would keep in the humbler walks of plain narrative and simple description, and venture to leave the more weighty and less obvious concerns of governments, national character, and historical disquisitions, to statesmen, civilians, and philosophers. The man, who, after having his mind tutored by the discipline of an early education, and stored with the treasures of ancient wisdom and modern erudition, sits leisurely down in his study, to embody his speculations within the dimensions of a quarto, boldly challenges the decision of public sentiment on his merits, and renders himself justly amenable to the tribunal of criticism for any failure in accomplishing what he attempts. But the eye of criticism should pass gently over the pages of the traveller,—it should be contented with gazing on what is new and interesting from its intrinsick value, although it may not be dressed out in so good a taste, and under so attracting a form as could be desired. There is one indispensable requisite however, in books of travels, without which they can have neither interest nor value;—we mean veracity. Aberrations from truth in this species of writing, which is concerned wholly in matters of fact, cannot be atoned for by any other qualities,—they weaken our respect for the writer's character, and destroy our confidence in his honesty—we lay down his book always with dissatisfaction, and often with disgust and contempt.

We do not make all these remarks with direct reference to the narrative of Captain Riley, although we cannot deny, that while reading it we have been frequently obliged to allow a latitude to our credulity, which we should be very unwilling to assign as its boundaries in ordinary cases. There is an air of good faith and sailor-like frankness prevailing throughout the book, which gives very favourable impressions of the fidelity and honest intentions of the author. His lively remembrance of his past sufferings, accompanied with no very marked aversion to the marvellous, caused him occasionally to give a very high colouring to his descriptions—yet the outlines are not often distorted, and we are persuaded they are sketched, though sometimes roughly, with a hand of truth.

At the commencement of his work, Captain Riley devotes a chapter to a sketch of his life, beginning with his birth in

Middletown, Connecticut, and coming down to the period of his embarking as commander of the brig *Commerce*. But this does not detain him long. The industrious occupation of a farmer's boy was not very fruitful of incidents—and although at the age of fifteen, having become a ‘tall, stout, athletick boy,’ he went to sea, somewhat against the inclination of his parents, and always after followed the honest but laborious calling of a sailor, in every gradation of rank, from cabin boy to commander, ‘making voyages in all climates usually visited by American ships—travelling by land through many of the principal states and empires of the world;’—yet during all these wanderings, he seems neither to have fallen on any very remarkable adventures, or to have engaged in any enterprizes more bold or hazardous, than are common to men of similar pursuits. He tells us, however, that he had been severely disciplined in the school of adversity, and that it was no new thing for him to be tossed on the billows and thrown on the rocks and shoals of life. In the year 1808, he found himself, and a vessel he commanded, in the harbour of Nantz, having been seized and carried there by the French. Here his ship and cargo were confiscated under the memorable Milan decrees of the 17th of December, 1807. In this expedition he lost nearly all his property, and returning home, with somewhat of a heavy heart and gloomy reflections on the waywardness of fortune, he remained unemployed till the close of the war.

In April, 1815, he sailed from Hartford, as master and supercargo of the brig *Commerce*. His first destination was New Orleans, and in the second chapter of his book, he furnishes us with a good deal of gratuitous, and not the most edifying information, about the shiftings of the wind, the currents in the gulf stream, breakers and shoals, and various other incidents of equal moment. All these, as well as the biographical sketch, might very well have been spared, and we should not probably have felt the loss.

He at length arrived at Gibraltar; whence he sailed for the Cape de Verd Islands, August 23, 1815, with twelve men on board, including himself. They proceeded without danger or apprehension, till the 29th, when the weather began to be foggy, and the nights exceedingly dark. At ten o'clock on the night of the following day, while the vessel was moving very rapidly, they were suddenly alarmed by a loud

roaring noise, which was first thought to proceed from an approaching squall, but which was very soon discovered to be caused by breakers foaming furiously at a short distance to the east. Every exertion was made to bring the vessel off, but in vain,—she struck, and the sea came rolling over her stern, and swept her decks. No hopes of safety remained, except in escaping as soon as possible from the wreck. A small boat was hoisted out—half a dozen casks of water were secured, and also a quantity of wine, bread, and salted provisions.

‘The vessel being now nearly full of water, the surf making a fair breach over her, and fearing she would go to pieces, I prepared a rope and put it in the small boat, having got a glimpse of the shore at no great distance, and taking Porter with me, we were lowered down on the larboard *or lee* side of the vessel, where she broke the violence of the sea and made it comparatively smooth. We shoved off, but on clearing away from the bow of the vessel, the boat was overwhelmed with a surf, and we were plunged into the foaming surges;—we were driven along by the current, aided by what seamen call the undertow, to the distance of about three hundred yards to the westward [eastward?] covered nearly all the time by the billows, which, following each other in quick succession, scarcely gave us time to catch a breath before we were literally swallowed by them, till at length we were thrown, together with our boat, upon a sandy beach.’ p. 16, 17.

Immediately after, the crew on board threw over casks, provisions, and such articles as they could obtain from the wreck,—these were driven on shore, and secured by Riley and Porter. A large rope was extended from the vessel, by the aid of which they all at length reached the shore, after having been repeatedly overwhelmed by the surf—some of them torn from their grasp and thrown violently on the beach. It was now day light, and the prospect, which opened upon them was dismal beyond description—a desert of barren sands and rocks on one side, and the sea running high and dashing furiously against the shore on the other.

While contemplating this cheerless, dreary scene, they observed an old man, two women, and five or six children approaching them. The appearance of these people was most wretched. The old man in particular, with long bushy hair, extending in every direction from his head, a curling beard

reaching to his breast, and his dress a coarse woollen blanket thrown carelessly around him, was a truly hideous and revolting figure. They came down to the beach and began to plunder such articles as fell in their way. No attempt was made to restrain them, as others were probably near, and being wholly at the mercy of these savages, the only obvious means of safety was, if possible, to conciliate their friendship. They were armed with hatchets, which they used in breaking open the boxes, that had floated ashore, and amused themselves by tying around their heads and other parts of their bodies the laced veils and silk handkerchiefs, which they contained. This party went off before night, but returned again at the dawn of the next morning, accompanied by two young men armed with scimitars. The old man also brought an iron spear with a handle twelve feet long. Thus armed they came down in a furious and threatening manner upon Capt. Riley and his crew, and drove them into the sea, where they succeeded in getting on board their long boat, which was laying in a shattered condition on the shore, and with much difficulty they finally reached the wreck. The women at the same time ran wildly about, uttering horrible yells, and throwing sand into the air. After having loaded on their camels all the provisions and articles of clothing, and burnt every thing else which they could find, they disappeared among the sand hills and rocks.

They returned not long after, and exhibited a very singular and unexpected change in their manners. They advanced to the water's edge, bowed themselves, beckoning the men in the brig to come on shore, and showing every mark of peace and friendship, which they could express by signs and gestures. There being no apparent danger, as the old man's formidable spear, as well as the other arms, had been left at a distance behind the sand hills, Capt. Riley concluded to go on shore, and endeavour to ascertain what they wanted. When he met them, the old man gave him to understand, that he wished to go on board, and that he must himself remain where he was as surety for his safe return. He was treated with every possible attention and kindness while the old man was on board,—every one was sedulous to soothe and please him. They took him by the hand, amused themselves with putting his hat on their heads and then returning it, and in the excess of their civilities they carefully examined various parts of his clothes, and particularly the interior of his pockets.

After making such examinations on the wreck as he thought proper, the old man came back. Riley rose from the ground with a view to return on board, but at this moment he was forcibly seized by two young men, who had been sitting near him—(every one appears in an instant to be armed, we know not very well how, as their weapons had all been left behind the sand hills at a considerable distance from the shore)—the women and children pointed their daggers and knives at his head and breast, and the old man, writhing his countenance into the most frightful and fiendlike contortions, caught hold of his hair with one hand, and seized a scimitar in the other, raising it in the air with an apparent intention to sever his head with one blow from his body. It soon appeared, however, that these gesticulations and threatenings were designed only to frighten him and compel him to yield up every thing in his possession. They inquired for money, and about a thousand dollars were immediately sent on shore, which they distributed among themselves. During this time Capt. Riley was sitting on the ground, surrounded by the natives, who were holding their weapons pointed towards him ready to run him through if he attempted to move. While in this perilous condition the notion came some how or other into his head, that if Antonio Michel, an old sailor, whom he had found at Gibraltar, should come on shore, it would be the means of procuring his escape. Antonio obeyed his directions accordingly, and as soon as he stepped on the beach, the natives flocked around him to receive the money, which they expected he would bring. When they discovered he had none, they beat him with their fists and the handles of their hatchets—stripped off all his clothes, and treated him in the most cruel manner. He fell on his knees and begged for his life, but in vain—these merciless wretches seemed prepared to massacre him on the spot. At this juncture it occurred to Capt. Riley, that money had been buried in the sand at a short distance, near the place where they had pitched a tent. As soon as he communicated this to them, they dragged Antonio to the place and compelled him to dig. Two men only staid behind to guard Riley, one with the notable spear, and the other with a scimitar, both of which were held within six inches of his head. At a moment when the attention of these two men was attracted by a noise among the party where Antonio was digging, he sprang from the ground and darted forward to the

beach. We quote his own words in discribing this most hazardous adventure. We do not think it the most credible part of the narrative, yet we are not disposed to look for misrepresentation even here.

‘I instantly sprang out from beneath their weapons, and flew to the beach. I was running for my life, and soon reached the water’s edge. Knowing I was pursued, and nearly overtaken, I plunged into the sea, with all my force, head foremost, and swam under water as long as I could hold my breath; on rising to the surface I looked round on my pursuers. The old man was within ten feet of me up to the chin in water, and was in the act of darting his spear through my body, when a surf rolling over me, saved my life and dashed him and his comrades on the beach. I was some distance westward [eastward ?] of the wreck, but swimming as fast as possible towards her, whilst surf after surf broke in towering heights over me, until I was enabled by almost superhuman exertions to reach the lee of the wreck, when I was taken into the boat over the stern by the mates and people.’ p. 37.

Enraged at the escape of Riley, the furious savages rushed upon poor Antonio, and plunged a spear into his heart. They disappeared soon after, dragging his lifeless body across the sand hills, and were seen no more. The condition of the unhappy sufferers was at this time still more deplorable, than it had before been. The natives had become exasperated, and would certainly massacre them all, should they be found again on shore; the wreck was fast tumbling in pieces, the wind blew strong from the west, the surf was breaking around them twenty or thirty feet high, and their only remaining boat was so crazy and leaky as to require two men constantly bailing to keep it dry. Despair seemed to look them in the face from every quarter. But some decision was speedily to be made, and they were not long in choosing to trust themselves to the mercy of the waves, rather than again be exposed to the relentless fury of the savages.

The boat, after all the repairs they could make, was in a wretched condition. A temporary mast had been constructed of a broken spar, to which some of the ship’s sails were attached. A small keg of water, a few pieces of salt pork, a live pig, three or four pounds of figs, which had been soaked in salt water, and a few bottles of wine, composed their whole stock of provisions. Thus equipt they entered the boat, which seemed scarcely capable of floating on the smoothest

sea, and launched out amidst the foaming billows, that were rolling in terrible commotion around them. And yet they passed safely out into the open sea, as Capt. Riley will have it, by a miraculous interposition of divine Providence.

‘The wind, as if by divine command, at this very moment ceased to blow. We hauled the boat out. The dreadful surges that were nearly bursting upon us, suddenly subsided, making a path for our boat about twenty yards wide, through which we rowed her out, as if she had been on a river in a calm, whilst on each side of us, and not more than ten yards distant, the surf continued to break twenty feet high, and with unabated fury. We had to row nearly a mile in this manner;—all were fully convinced that we were saved by the immediate interposition of divine Providence in this particular instance.’

After reaching the open sea, the night came on exceedingly dark, and the winds blew high. The boat had no rudder or keel, and was steered by a broken oar lashed to the stern. Their plan was, to run out directly to sea, with the hopes of falling in with some vessel, which might take them up. Having been four days out in this condition, and finding it impossible for the boat to hold together many days longer, they resolved on turning again towards the shore, as the only possible means of saving their lives. They had already killed and devoured their pig—their stock of water was nearly gone—they were exhausted with fatigue, hunger, and thirst, and perpetually harassed with the terrible apprehension of being soon swallowed up by the waves. On the 8th of September, having been nine days at sea, they discovered land at a distance, presenting itself in tremendous perpendicular and overhanging cliffs, rising to a height of five or six hundred feet. The boat was driven on a narrow sand-beach, and dashed in pieces by the violence of the waves. They left it, taking the little provision and water which remained, and slept among the rocks during the night. This place was a little north of Cape Blanco.

The two succeeding days were spent in clambering among the rocks, of which a romantick, but not very intelligible account is given. During two days’ unremitted exertion they found no place by which they could ascend to the plain above. When they finally arrived there, no other object presented itself, as far as the eye could reach, than a dreary waste t-

sand. They proceeded but a short distance, however, before they discovered, in a kind of valley, a company of Arabs with a drove of camels. They had no other alternative but to perish of hunger and thirst, or throw themselves on the mercy of the natives. They advanced towards them with signs of peace and submission. As soon as they were discovered, a man and two women came running towards them.

‘The man was armed with a scimeter, which he held naked in his hand; he run up to me as if to cut me to the earth. I bowed again in token of submission, and he began without further ceremony to strip off my clothing, while the women were doing the same to Mr. Williams and Mr. Savage. Thirty or forty more were arriving—some running on foot with muskets or naked scimeters in their hands; others, riding on swift camels, came up quickly. By the time they arrived, however, we were stripped to the skin. Those Arabs near us threw up sand into the air as the others approached, yelling loudly, which I now learned was a sign of hostility.’ p. 65.

They were all stripped in like manner; and after the Arabs had finished watering their camels and fought among themselves with great rage about the division of the prisoners, they went off in separate parties into the interior. Some of the prisoners were made to ride naked on the sharp backs of the camels, exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, while others were compelled to walk barefoot through sands, and over sharp flint stones, which were in some places very numerous. The women and children rode in baskets made of camels’ skins, ‘and fixed in such a manner with a wooden rim around them, over which the skins were sewed, that three or four could sit in them with perfect ease, only taking care to preserve their balance.’

In this way, sometimes riding and sometimes walking, they continued to wander over the desert in different directions for twelve days, suffering intensely from the heat of the sun by day, and the cold winds by night. The skin was scorched from various parts of their bodies—other parts were lacerated by the hard and heavy motions of the camels on which they rode, and their feet were mangled to the bone by the sharp stones over which they walked. They received no nourishment during this period except a little camel’s milk, sometimes half a pint, and occasionally a pint a day. They

found, also, once or twice a few snails, which served them for food. The sufferings of the captives during this whole tour must have been severe in the extreme—one should think, beyond the power of humanity to endure; yet, after all, there is an air of exaggeration thrown over the descriptions, which renders them in many places unnatural and improbable. It would seem to us, that here, as well as in some other parts, the distant recollections of the narrator did not bring the images of the reality with perfect distinctness and truth before his mind, and that they were magnified by the powerful impressions which his misfortunes and sufferings had stamped on his thoughts. Before they had been twelve days from the coast, he speaks of their ‘being so emaciated, that they could scarcely stand,’ and ‘Clark,’ he says, ‘was a perfect wreck of almost naked bones;’ and yet they did stand, and walk, and ride, and labour, and these, to our astonishment, without producing, in a single instance, either sickness, or physical inability to bear up under the distresses, which were inflicted on them.

The men in this part of the desert are much addicted to prayers and religious exercises. In these the women and children do not participate. The following is an account of the manner in which their evening devotions are conducted.

‘They all first washed themselves with sand in place of water; then wrapping themselves up with their *strip of cloth* and turning their faces to the earth, my old master stepped out before them, and commenced by bowing twice, repeating at each time ‘*Allah Houakibar* ;’ then kneeling and bowing his head to the ground twice; then raising himself up on his feet and repeating ‘*Hiel Allah Sheda Mohamed Rahsoob Allah*,’ bowing himself twice; and again prostrating himself on the earth as many times, then ‘*Allah Houakibar*’ was three times repeated. He was always accompanied in his motions and words by all present who could see him distinctly as he stood before them. He would then make a long prayer, and they recited together what I afterwards found to be a chapter of the Koran; and then all joined in chanting or singing some hymn or sacred poetry for a considerable time. This ceremony being finished, they again prostrated themselves with their faces to the earth, and the service was concluded.’ p. 98, 99.

In this part of his narrative Capt. Riley takes occasion to complain of the unladylike treatment which he received from the women. It seems that the ladies of the desert are not distinguished for those qualities of feminine tenderness,

quick sensibility, and sympathy for the distresses of others, which the united voice of travellers has allowed them to possess in every other part of the world,—at least, they made no ostentatious show of these qualities to Capt. Riley. It was their constant mode of salutation, whenever they met him, to spit at him and make wry faces ‘by every possible contortion of their frightful features’—to pelt him with stones and drive him about with sticks. They would not even allow him to occupy a small corner of a tent to screen his naked and lacerated body from the chilling damp winds of the night. We cannot but remark, how much less fortunate he was, than the great traveller, Ledyard, who, after having witnessed every mode of human existence, and experienced every species of sufferings, tells us with the feeling of grateful recollections, that ‘he had found women in all countries civil, obliging, tender, and humane—ever inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest; and that whether hungry, dry, cold, or sick, he had always found them friendly to him, and uniformly so.’ We cannot forbear, also, contrasting with this treatment, that which Park received from the negro women a little to the south of the desert. They were hospitable, compassionate and kind. In one instance, when dejected and alone, ready to faint from fatigue and hunger, and exposed to a heavy storm of wind and rain, he was accidentally discovered by a poor negro woman, who invited him kindly into her hut, and spread before him such refreshments as it afforded. She desired him to rest his weary limbs through the night on her mat, and soon resumed her task of spinning cotton, lightening the labours of the night by an occasional song. Among others she sung, in a sweet and plaintive air, the following pathetick lines, which he tells us are literally translated. ‘The winds roared and the rains fell;—the poor white man, faint and weary, came and sat under our tree.—He has no mother to bring him milk; no wife to grind his corn. Let us pity the poor white man.’

How it happens that Capt. Riley made himself an object of so much aversion to the gentler sex on the Zahaara, as we have not time to inquire, we shall allow our readers to conjecture.

After wandering about the desert fourteen days, the tribes, which had made prisoners of the author and his companions, were accidentally met by two itinerant merchants, Sidi Ham-

et and Seid, from the confines of Morocco. Hamet was fortunately on his way to Morocco, and after much debate and altercation with the owners, he succeeded in purchasing five of the wretched sufferers, Riley, Savage, Horace, Clark, and Burns, with a view of carrying them to Swearah, or Mogadore, where Capt. Riley assured him, they would be redeemed the moment they arrived. This stipulation was confirmed to the satisfaction of Hamet, after having exacted from Riley the most solemn protestations that he spoke the truth, assuring him, if it proved otherwise, his own life and the perpetual slavery of his companions would be the forfeit. Sidi Hamet's means did not allow him to purchase any more of the crew, and they were left behind, scattered in different parts of the desert.

The sufferers had no reason to regret their exchange of masters. Hamet was comparatively a humane man. He bought an old camel, nearly dead with age, which he killed, and allowed them a bountiful repast on its blood and entrails. He made shoes for them of its hide, and gave each a piece of an old blanket, or goat's skin, to protect him from the sun. Thus clad and refreshed, they started on their northern tour across the desert. The company consisted of Sidi Hamet, Seid, a young Arab, the five prisoners, and three camels. They began their march about the first of October, and in twenty days they had crossed the desert and arrived at the Wed Noon, or river Noon, in the south part of Suse. Three days after, they entered the village of Stuka, in the same territory, where the prisoners were to stay till Sidi Hamet should go to Mogadore in search of the friend, whom Capt. Riley represented as being there, ready to pay their ransom. A scrap of paper was brought to him, on which he wrote a hasty letter, with a sharpened reed, describing his wretched and perilous situation. But at this juncture he was in a sad dilemma. He knew nobody at Mogadore, to whom he could direct his letter, and yet his life and the safety of his fellowsufferers depended on its being received by some person, who would immediately comply with its request. But his anxieties and fears were all at once calmed, by a timely recollection of a remarkable dream, which happened to him a little after his captivity;—‘it had literally come to pass thus far—why should he doubt of its whole accomplishment?’ Thus encouraged, he wrote the fol-

lowing direction ; ' To the English, French, Spanish, or American consuls, or any Christian merchants in Mogadore, or Swearah.' In the letter he requested the person, who should receive it, to pay Sidi Hamet nine hundred and twenty dollars, with two double barrelled guns, the price of their ransom.

In the journey across the desert, they had fared much better than among the tribes at the south. They seldom suffered greatly for want of food, although they did not always receive it in the most bountiful portions, or of the most savoury kind. The old camel did not last long, but they found goats and sheep among the wandering tribes whom they passed, some of which their masters bought, and others they stole. Sidi Hamet contrived once to steal a little barley, and they were occasionally treated by the hospitable savages, whom they met, with a kind of pudding, which made, with milk, a delicious repast. Some of them were once or twice beaten for what their masters considered obstinacy or neglect of duty, but generally their privations and hardships do not appear to have been greater than those of the natives themselves. The party was waylaid occasionally by robbers, and serious consequences, as Capt. Riley believes, might have happened, but fortunately none did happen. They came forward once, to be sure, with a fearful clang of arms, but by some marvellous accident, or the dazzling splendour of Sidi Hamet's double barrelled gun, they were induced to call out with the customary salutation of 'peace.' But there is something yet remarkable in these same robbers.

' They ran along the beach with incredible swiftness, chasing each other, and taking up and throwing stones, that I should suppose would weigh from *six to eight pounds*, with a jerk that made them *whiz through the air like cannon balls*. They threw them against the cliffs of rocks, which resounded with the blow, and many of the stones were dashed to pieces as they struck.' p. 185.

Little was known of the Great Desert before the time of Leo Africanus. It is the *Lybia Interiour* of Ptolomy, and those parts bordering on the mountains of Atlas were inhabited by the ancient Getuli. Although Leo passed across the desert, he seems to have derived the knowledge of its geographical divisions, and the characters and extent of the different nations, whom he describes, principally from the

information of others. We have only to look for a moment at a map, constructed after the representations of Leo, and even with the corrections derived from Marmol and Labat's Collections, to discover, that very erroneous notions have prevailed till lately, of this extensive portion of the globe. We shall find the whole desert divided out into kingdoms, governed by powerful sovereigns. To the northwest parts, particularly, which exhibit at present a dismal solitude of sands and rocks, was assigned a large population.

The whole extent of the desert is more than double that of the United States. Capt. Riley's description is confined to a very small portion, but the general features of the whole are probably similar to those of the tract which it was his ill fortune to traverse. Its surface is smooth, level and exceedingly hard, consisting of gravel, sand, and stones mingled together, and baked, by the intense heat of the sun, almost to the solidity of marble. Not an object appears as far as the eye can reach to intercept the sight—not a land-mark to guide, not a tree or shrub to cheer the desponding traveller. This is the aspect of the desert, and it is uniform and unbroken, except at long intervals where small basins appear to be scooped out of this solid mass, extending from five to thirty feet below the surface, and serving as reservoirs for the rain water, that sometimes falls into them. At this time there had been no rain for two years, and they were entirely dry. A kind of soil is spread over these excavations, out of which grows a dwarf thorn bush, whose leaves answer the purpose of food for the camels, although they are strongly impregnated with salt. Some parts of this vast plain are covered with floating mountains of loose sand, which are thrown into various forms by violent winds, and sometimes bury whole caravans under their weight.

The inhabitants of the desert are universally Arabs, live in tents, and wander from place to place. They are proud of their independence, and despise those, who are so tame spirited as to submit to any form of government;—contented, cheerful, and happy, they think their own native desert the only favoured residence of men. They are rapacious, avaricious, and revengeful,—and however strange it may seem, no where is the proverbial hospitality of the Arabs more conspicuous, than among them. The moment a stranger appears before their tent, he is greeted with the welcome of

peace, and receives every possible attention. The offices of hospitality generally devolve on the women. They relieve the camels of their burdens, spread out a tent for the strangers, and supply them with food and water. They also show great respect and tenderness to the aged and infirm.

The food of the natives consists almost wholly of camels' milk, and this in small quantities. We need no other evidence of its wholesome and nutritive qualities, than that the people live to a very advanced age, and that sickness and disease are seldom known. The salubrity of this region is mentioned by Leo and the old geographers. The camel seems to be a peculiar gift of providence for the benefit of man. No other animal could supply his place in the countries where he is used. He travels with rapidity, bears enormous burdens, endures with incredible patience the excesses of fatigue, hunger, and thirst,—and it is from the camel that the inhabitants derive the only means of subsistence, which they could procure. Leo says [lib. ix.], that utility was not the only purpose answered by these animals in his time. They were taught to dance and contribute to the amusement, as well as the convenience and support of their masters. The mode of teaching this graceful exercise, was to put them, when quite young, into a kind of stove with a heated floor, where they were aided by the sound of a musical instrument in forming the various postures and contortions, which they found it convenient to assume. Ever afterwards, when the sound of musick vibrated on their ears, it awakened a lively remembrance of the heated floor, and caused them to move involuntarily in concert with the tune.

We were hardly prepared to find so favourable an account of the literary character of these tenants of the desert, as appears in the following extract.

‘ They all learn to read and write ; in every family or division of a tribe they have one man who acts as teacher to the children. They have boards of from one foot square to two feet long, and about an inch thick by eighteen inches wide. On these boards the children learn to write with a piece of pointed reed. When a family of wandering Arabs pitch their tents, they set apart a place for their school—have all their boys who have been circumcised, of from eight to eighteen or twenty years old, attend, and are taught to read and to write from the Koran, which is kept in manuscript by every family on skins. They write their characters

from right to left—are very particular in the formation of them, and make their lines very straight. All the children attend from choice or amusement. The teacher, I was told, never punishes a child, but explains the meaning of things, and amuses him by telling tales that are both entertaining and constructive. He reads or rehearses a chapter from the Koran or some other book, for they have a great many poems written also on skins.' p. 371, 372.

They are not altogether without skill in such arts as promote the few conveniences of life, which their condition allows them to enjoy. They have smiths with portable forges, who construct axes, knives, large needles, and the iron work of their saddles,—the women manufacture camel's hair into cloth for tents and garments.

On the seventh day after their confinement, a very fierce and strange looking man appeared before the walls of Stuka, and with a tone of authority demanded entrance. He was a messenger of joy to the poor captives, as he had seen Sidi Hamet near Mogadore, and had been requested by him to call and say, that 'God had prospered his journey.' This man recalled to Capt Riley's mind 'those high spirited, heroick, and generous robbers, who are so admirably described in ancient history.' Although we have no distinct recollection of those robbers of antiquity, and are compelled to confess our ignorance of the *ancient history* to which our author refers, yet we think there is something sufficiently singular in the deportment and panoply of the personage in question.

'He was of a dark complexion, nearly six feet in height, and extremely muscular—had a long musket in his hand, a pair of horse pistols hanging in his belt, and a scimitar and two long knives hanging by his sides, with the haick or blanket for a dress, and a large white turban on his head. He had a pair of long iron spurs, which were fastened to his slippers of yellow Morocco leather. He had two powder-horns slung from his neck, and a pouch in which he carried a wooden pipe and some tobacco, besides a plenty of leaden balls and slugs.' p. 313, 314.

The next day another Moor appeared at the gate, by the name of *Rais Bel Cossim*, who brought the joyful intelligence, that Sidi Hamet had arrived at Mogadore, and had delivered the letter to Mr. Willshire, the English consular agent there, who immediately advanced the money required. He brought a very affectionate letter from this gentleman, informing Ri-

ley of his ransom having been paid, and that he was at liberty to return with Rais Bel Cossim to Mogadore, where he had detained Side Hamet at a hostage till he and his companions should arrive. Nor did the benevolence of Mr. Willshire end here. He sent various articles of cloathing and supplies of provisions, and spared nothing which he thought would contribute to their comfort on the road. Rais had made every thing ready for their journey by the next morning, and they started in company with several Moors. They rode on mules, and in a few days were received under the hospitable roof of their benefactor at Mogadore. This journey was not performed without a variety of perils and adventures, which are interesting in themselves, but which our limits will not allow us to relate in detail. The principal agent in producing them was Shieck Ali, a remarkable and somewhat mysterious personage, who appeared among them at Stuka, and made several attempts to seize on the prisoners as his own property, to discharge a debt which had long been due to him from Sidi Hamet. But his designs were all frustrated by the vigilance and address of Rais Bel Cossim.

After the author gets safely to Mogadore, and recovers his health and strength a little under the kind attentions of Mr. Willshire, he entertains us with two or three rare stories of his old friend Sidi Hamet, who, it seems, was knowing in the stars, acquainted with the cardinal points, and had in all probability travelled in various parts of the desert. These are points on which we have no doubt,—but we see no reason for putting the least confidence in the tales of this man, whom Capt. Riley in another place calls a ‘thievish Arab,’ and who had by no means approved himself on the desert a very conscientious observer of the common principles of honour, honesty, or veracity. The marvellous adventures of Gaudenzio di Lucca, in crossing the desert, are quite as interesting, and we imagine little less true. These tales may be ranked with those of Adams, respecting the mysterious city of Tombuctoo, but we must remonstrate against the unqualified manner in which they are mentioned in the title page, as calculated to convey erroneous impressions to the publick. Sidi Hamet conducted the prisoners safe across the desert; but his only motive was the price which he expected to receive for their ransom, and his feelings of hu-

manity may be measured by the express stipulation with Riley, that he should have his throat cut in case he was disappointed.

After remaining about two months at Mogadore, he started under the guidance of a Jew, on a journey to Tangier, where Mr. Simpson, the American consul for the empire of Morocco, resides. He had previously put his companions on board a vessel bound to Gibraltar. He left Mogadore on the fourth of January, and arrived at Tangier on the nineteenth. During this journey he passed many tribes of wandering Arabs, who seem to compose a great portion of the population of Morocco. They resemble in their general character the Arabs of the desert, differing only from local causes, and are a totally distinct race from the Moors. They live in tents, and are wholly occupied in cultivating the ground and keeping herds of cattle. Every true Arab loathes the restraints and despises the security of towns. It is a common proverb among them, that 'the earth is the Arabs' portion.'

'They live in families or sections of tribes, and pitch their tents in companies of from twenty to one hundred and fifty tents, each tent containing one family. These tents when pitched are called a *Douar*;—they elect a chief to each of these douars, whom they dignify with the title of Alcayd or sheick, for the time being. Their authority however is rather of an *advisory* than a *mandatory* kind.' p. 342.

Mr. Dupuis says, in his well written appendix to the fabulous narrative of Adams, that 'their hair is black and straight, their eyes large, black, and piercing. their noses gently arched, their beards full and bushy, and they have invariably good teeth. They are generally tall and robust, with fine features and intelligent countenances. The colour of those who reside in Barbary is a deep but bright brunette, essentially unlike the sallow tinge of the mulatto.'

There is another distinct class of people in Morocco called Berrebbers, who inhabit the mountainous districts. They are hardy, enterprizing, and warlike—tenacious of their independence, impatient under restraint, and submit no longer to the control of any government, than till an opportunity occurs of throwing off its shackles. They are ferocious in their tempers, and more addicted to theft, treachery, and

murder, than the Arabs. They regard no religious or moral restraints. In some parts, however, they are said to be warm in their friendships, and not without hospitality. They associate in tribes under the authority of a chief, to whom they pay great deference, and reside in houses rudely constructed of stone and timbers. They are devoted to agricultural pursuits.

The Berrebbers are supposed to be the descendants of the original inhabitants, who had possession of the states of Barbary before the Arabian conquest. They speak various dialects of a language, which has no resemblance to the Arabick. The present Arabs of Barbary are the direct descendants of those warlike followers of the prophet, who, about the beginning of the fifth century after the Hegira, extended their conquests over the whole north of Africa. The Moors are a mixed race, originating principally in the other two, and partly in the Europeans and negroes, who have at different periods found their way into the country. They live in towns and cities, and are employed entirely in manufactures and trade. These are the three distinct classes of people, who inhabit western Barbary. The character, modes of life, and manners of each is peculiar to itself. The Moors are less strongly marked in these respects, but still their occupations and localities have given them prominent characteristic features, which, as intermarriages between the different races are disapproved and seldom take place, are becoming daily more and more fixed.

At Tangier Capt. Riley remained a few days, where he was very hospitably entertained by Mr. Simpson. We confess it was not very gratifying to our national feelings, to find our consular establishment here so much inferior to that of any of the European powers, and we sincerely hope our government will not be slow in giving it a respectability, which shall put it on an equality with them. In a country like Morocco, with which our intercourse is very limited, our character as a nation will be in no small degree estimated by the dignity and importance we attach to the offices established there, as channels of communication between the two governments.

After remaining a short time at Gibraltar, Capt. Riley sailed for New York, and arrived in his native country on the twentieth of March, 1816. He soon after repaired to Washington, where he received from the national treasury the full

amount of his ransom, with an assurance on the part of the government, that provision should immediately be made for procuring the release of his unfortunate fellow sufferers, who were yet in slavery. From these prompt and liberal aids of the government, we are encouraged to hope, that more effectual measures will speedily be adopted, than have hitherto existed, for redeeming such Americans, as may hereafter be cast on these inhospitable shores. Two of the number, whom Capt. Riley left behind in the desert, Porter and Robbins, have since been redeemed by the indefatigable exertions of Mr. Willshire, and have arrived in this country. In his letters to Capt. Riley, inserted at the close of the book, Mr. Willshire mentions having heard of three others in Suse, or somewhere in the northern parts of the desert, and expresses a sanguine hope, that he shall be able, with the funds he had received from our consul, to procure their redemption, and restore them again to liberty, their country and friends.



ART. XVIII. *An Elementary Treatise on Mineralogy and Geology; being an introduction to the study of these sciences, and designed for the use of pupils—for persons attending lectures on these subjects—and as a companion for travellers in the United States of America. Illustrated by six plates.* By Parker Cleaveland, professor of mathematics and natural philosophy, and lecturer on chemistry and mineralogy in Bowdoin College, member of the American Academy, and corresponding member of the Linnæan society of New England.

—————item est in viscera terræ ;
 Quasque recondiderat, Stygiisque admoberat umbris,
 Effodiuntur opes————— OVID.

Boston ; Cummings & Hilliard, 1816, 8vo, pp. 668.

THE author of an elaborate, elementary treatise on mineralogy in this country is no common adventurer ; a few only among us, have learned to love stones, to find inexhaustible variety, and exquisite beauty in productions, far removed from the vulgar, and commonly to be found by those only who can enjoy them. Such an author has to contend with the reflection, that he must make readers for his book. Most